

LSTA LIBRARY OUTREACH SERVICES GRANTS 2008-2009

Program-Specific Information & Guidelines

1. What is this grant program and its purpose?

LSTA Library Outreach Services Grants are available in 2008-2009 to enable libraries to implement services for communities of users who are currently unserved or underserved. The purpose of this grant program is to provide start-up funds for a new library service or to extend library services to an unserved or underserved group. With a solid needs assessment as the foundation, and working in partnership with the target audience, libraries will develop user-focused services to address the library and information needs of the target audience. This grant program allows libraries to reach new and underserved persons by:

- Adapting traditional library services,
- Developing innovative approaches, and
- Creating inviting and accessible library programs.

Proposed services are intended to reach members of the library's primary audience:

- Public libraries - the legal service area
- Academic libraries - students, faculty and staff of the institution
- Public school library media centers - students and the adults who support those children in their learning (teachers, staff and parents)
- Library/media center administrative units of public school districts - the schools comprising the district and those schools' students and the adults who support those children in their learning (teachers, staff and parents)

These grant projects may be single year or multiyear (up to three years) in length. (See section #4 of these guidelines for further details of multiyear grants.)

This grant program will support the implementation of the *Library Services & Technology Act Five-Year Plan 2008-2012* (available at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/plan2008-12.pdf>), principally Goal 1.

Goal 1 – Enrich the lives of North Carolinians through enhanced and targeted programs and services in our libraries that address the needs of specific audiences.

This program will also help achieve these purposes of the federal LSTA program: targeting library and information services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds; to individuals with disabilities; to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; to persons having difficulty using a library; and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line.

These grants are in a category called "Project Grants" in the policies and procedures outlined in *Library Services & Technology Act Five-Year Plan 2008-2012* at the URL above. The grants have a two-step process: 1) eligible libraries submit a Letter of Intent, and 2) libraries whose Letter of Intent is approved may submit a full application. See details in #3 of *General Information & Provisions* for 2008-2009 LSTA grants at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/GenInfoProvs08-09.pdf>.

2. Are you ready to apply for a Library Outreach Services Grant?

To be successful, proper groundwork must be laid. If you cannot answer "Yes" to the following questions, you should first apply for an LSTA Project Planning Grant, which has no matching requirement.

The library --

- Is this project consistent with our library's long-range plans or strategic priorities? (If this isn't so, there's no need to proceed.)
- Do our local library or institutional policies support the activities we propose for the grant? (For example, if a school library proposes after-school programs that involve family members, will the school's security policies allow non-students into the building after hours?)
- Do we have the support of our governing and/or funding bodies regarding sustainability of the service once the grant is completed?

The target community / audience --

- Have we already established relationships with the community we wish to serve?
- Have we involved the target community in project planning, decision-making and implementation?
- Have we conducted a thorough and systematic needs assessment to gather more information about our target audience and its library and information needs? Do we have quantitative (numerical/statistical) and qualitative data to support the proposed project?
- Do we understand the life circumstances of the target audience (e.g., language, transportation issues)? Will the project accommodate such circumstances?
- Are we confident that the services we propose derive from the information needs of the target audience?

Related organization or partners --

- Have we already established relationships with the organizations that represent and serve the target community we wish to serve?
- Have we involved related organizations in project planning, decision-making and implementation?
- Have we considered and involved all obvious partners?

Having implemented an LSTA Project Planning Grant will not guarantee that a Library Outreach Services applicant will be successful in obtaining grant funding. However, a comprehensive planning process may be very beneficial in helping to prepare an appropriate and sound grant application. See more details about LSTA Project Planning Grants in #2 of *General Information & Provisions* for 2008-2009 LSTA grants at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/GenInfoProvs08-09.pdf>.

For help with thinking about and planning your project, see *Designing Library Services for Hispanic Communities* at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/hispanic/HispWkshpMan0401.pdf>.

While this resource is targeted specifically to service to Hispanic users, the principles and strategies it outlines will be helpful in planning services to any group.

3. Who may apply?

The following libraries are eligible to submit a Letter of Intent:

- public libraries that qualify for grants from the Aid to Public Libraries Fund;
- community college libraries;
- libraries serving the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina (which includes libraries serving the Area Health Education Centers);
- libraries serving the member institutions of North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities;
- qualifying public school library media centers; and
- library/media center administrative units of public school **districts** [*A public school district is a local school administrative unit as defined in Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.*].

Only libraries that submit a Letter of Intent by November 15, 2007, and receive authorization to submit a full application are eligible to apply for a Library Outreach Services Grant.

For projects that involve collaboration, only one partner library may apply for the grant. That library will be the lead organization for the grant, responsible for administering the grant (i.e., managing the project, including acting as fiscal agent, serving as primary contact for the project, maintaining records and paperwork generated by the grant, assuring the successful implementation of the project, and taking responsibility for completion of final reports).

An eligible library system or academic institution may submit only one Library Outreach Services Grant in this round. [*Definitions: A library system is inclusive of all outlets making up that system (e.g. Nantahala Regional Library). An institution is the parent institution of the library (e.g. UNC-Greensboro).*]

4. Multiyear grants

Multiyear grants are an option for the Library Outreach Services Grant Program. Applicants may submit requests for funding of up to three years to allow sufficient time to:

- develop a sustainable program or service;
- test a concept; or
- undertake a project that is too complex to complete in one year.

The initial approval of a multiyear project does not guarantee funding for future years, but it does assume the project will have priority over new proposals in subsequent years if:

- federal funds are available;
- the required match from local sources is available;
- the project is being implemented as proposed and approved; and
- the project is being managed according to federal requirements and according to terms of the grant agreement.

Multiyear grants are intended to support implementation of a new project or service. LSTA Project Planning Grants are available to assist libraries if they have not completed a needs assessment and planning activities as well as partnership development activities.

In addition to the requirements for any grantee applying for a one-year grant, multiyear applicants must provide information about the final project outcomes, a multiyear action plan and budget for the full project. While evaluation and other factors may lead to changes over the three-year period, applicants must have plans with clear outcomes in order to qualify for initial funding. Modifications to the project during implementation may be allowed in subsequent years with approval of the State Library in consultation with the LSTA Advisory Committee and/or peer reviewers.

LSTA funds should be viewed as start-up money. Long-term funding for projects or services that are successful is a local responsibility. To help ease the transition to local funding and demonstrate local commitment to sustainability, the level of match will increase each year of a Library Outreach Services project. Applicants for a multiyear grant will be expected to provide a plan for sustainability of any new service or program if appropriate.

Complete guidelines for multiyear grants are available at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/multiyear0809.pdf>.

5. What amount of funds may be requested?

The maximum grant request is \$50,000 unless the project is a collaborative effort of multiple eligible library systems, in which case the maximum grant request is \$100,000. The minimum grant request is \$5,000. Any amount over \$50,000 (or \$100,000 for a collaborative project of multiple library systems) that is required to accomplish the project is the responsibility of the lead library and partners. Unless they are collaborating with another public school district or another type of library, a library/media center administrative unit of a public school district may apply for only \$50,000.

Applicants for multiyear grants are eligible to apply for up to the maximum amount of funds allowed annually for this grant program.

6. Are local matching funds required?

Yes. Library Outreach Services Grant budgets must include local matching funds. These funds must be clearly documented in the application and meet the following guidelines.

- The local contribution to the project must equal a minimum of 10% of the amount of federal funds requested for a one-year project, or the first year of a multiyear project. The 10% match is a 1 to 10 ratio of matching funds to grant funds. If the grant amount requested is \$25,000, the local match must be at least \$2,500, and the total project cost will be \$27,500 (\$25,000 grant funds + \$2,500 local funds).
- **For multiyear projects, the local contribution must increase each year. The second year match is 25% of the LSTA funds (a ratio of 1 to 4), and the third year is 50% of LSTA funds (a ratio of 1 to 2).**
- All of the cash match must be from local or state funds or funds from non-governmental agencies (e.g., foundations, service clubs, partner organizations). **Other federal funds and local administrative overhead costs may not be used as local match.**
- Cash matching funds must be spent for the same categories of allowable expenses as the grant funds [See below: "How may project funds be used?"]. Exceptions may be allowed in instances where the expense is integral to implementation of the project, but the expense is not allowable with federal grant funds (e.g. entertainment/refreshment costs, paid advertising). Contact State Library staff to discuss exceptions before submitting the final application.
- The local contribution may be a combination of cash and staff salary and benefits.
- Salary and benefits for existing staff who will work with the project may be used for up to 25% of the required local match. Applicants must indicate the role of staff member(s) with regard to the project and must provide hourly pay rate and benefits calculations information as well as the number of hours the staff will work on the project.

- Matching funds must be from source(s) clearly explained in the grant application.
- Matching funds must be available at the time a funded library signs the grant agreement.
- Matching funds must be available and spent during the same time period as the grant funds: 2008-2009 grants **and match** are to be spent in the 2008-2009 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

The State Library recognizes that a local commitment for future matching funds may not be possible; the intention to provide matching funds in years two and/or three will suffice in the first year of the application.

No expenditures of either grant or local matching funds may be made until library representatives and the State Librarian sign the grant agreement.

7. How may the project funds be used?

The project will provide funds for activities that implement **library programs and services** for the targeted audience based on local needs assessment data and planning.

Project funds are to be used for necessary and appropriate costs to achieve the project's objectives. The proposal must clearly state how proposed expenditures were determined and why each is needed to achieve project outcomes.

Possible expenditure categories and definitions are listed below.

- *Equipment and furniture.* Costs for equipment and furniture (if any) to be purchased and used by the project are covered in this category. Include only items with a useful life of at least one year and an acquisition cost of \$1,000 or more. Small equipment items that do not meet this definition should be shown in the "Supplies" category. [Note: The State Library does not encourage purchase of furniture unless it is critical to the success of the project.]

Applicants proposing to purchase computers or printers must provide specifications for all hardware, and these specifications must be suitable for the project's clearly defined purposes. Successful applicants may be asked to modify their requested purchases if reviewers note potential issues with the proposed configurations.

- *Library Materials.* This category includes costs for books, periodicals, newspapers, documents, pamphlets, photographs, reproductions, microforms, pictorial works, graphic works, musical scores, maps, charts, globes, sound recordings, video recordings, computer software, and materials designed specifically for the handicapped.

For an Outreach Grant, the acquisition of library materials should not be the primary purpose of the project. If library materials are purchased, then the materials should support the programs and services that are the project's main focus.

- *Salaries and Benefits.*
Allowable with grant funds: Wages and benefits for each temporary staff to be employed for the project. Temporary staff means part-time or full-time personnel hired specifically to help carry out the project, or additional hours for existing part-time staff. The budget narrative should explain the basis for determining the salary and benefits, with benefits shown separately from the salary. Fees and expenses for consultants should be included under Contractual Services.

Allowable as a local match: Up to 25% of the required local match can be met with staff salary and benefits, for existing staff that will work with the project. Applicants must indicate the role of staff member(s) with regard to the project, and provide hourly pay rate and benefits calculations information as well as the number of hours they will work on the project.

[NOTE for K-12 School Libraries: **Appendix A** provides specific clarification regarding use of grant and matching funds for salaries and benefits in a public school environment.]

- **Contractual Services.** This category should include costs for specific services to be performed by an outside organization or individual under contract. Examples include consultant fees, rentals, and honoraria for speakers. Applicants should be able to show in the application that proposed contractors are qualified to perform the work or service.
- **Travel and/or Training expenses.** Include mileage, lodging, meals and/or training costs associated with the project.
- **Supplies.** Include costs for project supplies such as paper, tape, pencils, computer supplies, and small equipment items costing less than \$1,000.
- **Postage and printing costs.**
- **Other Expenses.** Include in this category costs for any other justifiable expenses needed to implement the project but which do not fall under the prior categories.

Note: Promotional activities are a necessary aspect of Library Outreach Services projects, however there are federal restrictions limiting promotional and marketing costs. Applicants should confer with State Library staff for guidance on allowability of proposed expenditures for promotional efforts.

Use of LSTA funds for certain allowable purchases may require public libraries or public elementary and secondary school libraries to comply with the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Additional information on CIPA, with guidelines and all required forms, is available at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/cipa.htm>.

Ineligible expenses:

- entertainment/refreshment costs
- administrative "overhead" or indirect costs

8. What is the basis for selecting projects for funding?

Eligibility for consideration:

To be eligible for consideration, a library must

- have submitted a Letter of Intent and have been authorized to submit a full application;
- have submitted a full application that is received by the deadline of 5:00 p.m. February 21, 2008.

Criteria for evaluating eligible applications:

The project must focus on delivering library services and programs that are based on the needs of the target community. Reviewers will look for evidence throughout the narrative that the project is user-centered, not library-centered. Representatives of the target audience must be actively involved in developing the project plan.

The proposal must provide sufficient and clear information and rationale to support the applicant's request for funding. Reviewers will base their funding decision on how well the applicant meets these expectations:

Project Description and Implementation

A. A thorough needs assessment

The project plan **must** be based on the results of a well-designed needs assessment that resulted in both qualitative (e.g., results of interviews, focus groups, and meetings with key groups) and quantitative data (numerical/statistical). [If an applicant cannot provide evidence of a thorough needs assessment – that includes all required components – then the library should first apply for an LSTA Project Planning Grant for funds to help with costs of carrying out an appropriate assessment. For more information about library needs assessment, see this title: Westbrook, Lynn. ©2001. *Identifying and analyzing user needs: a complete handbook and ready-to-use assessment workbook with disk*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc. (May be borrowed on interlibrary loan from the State Library. OCLC #44979602.)

Reviewers will look for an understanding of the unserved or underserved target audience, including its demographics, barriers to library use, and active involvement of representatives of the target audience in developing the project plan.

B. A clear goal

The project plan outlined in the application must have a clear goal that is based on the needs assessment and is a clear response to it. The goal should be a statement that describes the ideal result. For example, if the need is to improve information literacy for disadvantaged teens, the project goal might be: *Neighborhood teens have the knowledge and skills to find the online information they need to succeed in school and in life.*

C. Outcomes and outputs

The project plan must include a statement describing how the library will know if the project is successful. That is, if your project is successful, what measurable change will take place between where your target audience is now and where they will be as a result of the project? The project plan outlined in the library's application must include at least one outcome.

Project success can be measured in two ways—qualitative and quantitative.

- A qualitative measure (outcome) describes the project's impact on the target audience. It describes that change (or indicators of change) in the target audience's skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude, status, or life condition brought about in part as a result of the project.
 - For example, in response to the goal *Neighborhood teens have the knowledge and skills to find the online information they need to succeed in school and in life*, your outcome might be: *Teachers at the neighborhood school will report that students use appropriate online search strategies to find the information they need to complete their assignments.*
- A quantitative measure (output) defines the project's success using numbers—numbers, data or statistics (e.g., number of participants, number of objects scanned, number of workshops taught).
 - For the information literacy project, an output might be: *At least half, or ten of the twenty After School Club members, will complete the workshop series online searching.*

A word of caution, the outcomes and outputs are not a list of project activities; they are the results of activities. That is, your outcomes and outputs will **not** be:

- By December 1, install training lab in community center classroom.
- By March 1, hold two workshop series.

Your plan must have, at a minimum, one outcome, which will guide you in determining the appropriate activities, budget, and evaluation in your project plan. Be careful to limit the number of outcomes you are seeking—one is often enough.

D. An action plan

The Action Plan describes the activities the library and its partners will carry out during the project, **including activities to promote the program or service**. It includes information about staffing (the role of existing library staff as well as any staff hired specifically for the project) and it provides a timetable showing projected completion dates and who is responsible for ensuring the activity occurs.

E. An effective evaluation

Your proposal should include a clear plan for evaluating its success. An effective plan must include the ways that you will determine whether your project has achieved the outcome you selected (see Section C above). Your project plan must describe the methods and tools that you plan to use to gather information to determine whether or not you have achieved the change you describe in your outcome.

An acceptable evaluation of an outreach project must clearly answer the question: What difference did the project make in the lives of the target audience? What changes occurred in skills, knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and life circumstance due in part to the program/project?

Congress and the federal government are requiring increased accountability for federal grant recipients. As a result, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the federal agency that administers LSTA, is placing a stronger emphasis on outcome-based evaluation of projects at both the local and state level. This is a primary reason that qualitative (or outcomes) evaluation is so important.

When your project is completed — and/or at the end of a project year — you will submit a report to the State Library. It may help you develop your plan for evaluation if you look at an example of the report you will have to provide. See the 2006-07 online report form at <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/report0607.htm>.

F. Local commitment and sustainability

Applicants must demonstrate that library leadership and representatives of the governing agency/institution support this project and see the long-term importance of services to the target audience and integration of those services into the overall program of the library. The project must be consistent with the library's long-range or strategic plan.

For multiyear grants, applicants must include a plan for long-term sustainability of the service or program. Multiyear grants that include significant components from previously-funded single year projects will be held to a higher standard of sustainability.

G. Community partners

Collaborative partnerships can help strengthen the project and build community support and involvement. While collaborative partnerships are not a prerequisite or requirement for this

grant program, the applicant must demonstrate knowledge of other agencies that also provide services to the targeted audience and must show that the other agencies were, at minimum, consulted during the planning and grant writing stages of the project.

If there are agencies that might be considered obvious partners for the proposed project but that are not included in project development or implementation, the omission of such an organization must be explained and justified. For example, a school that proposes a project to increase reading during the summer should discuss the local public library's Summer Reading Program and its impact on the school's project.

Tip to Applicants: See <<http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/projplanguide.htm>> for guidelines about writing a well-crafted project plan.

9. What else do applicants need to know?

General Information & Provisions for LSTA Grants

Further information and requirements for 2008-2009 LSTA grants is provided in the *General Information & Provisions* document at

<http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/GenInfoProvs08-09.pdf> . There you will find essential information such as: additional factors that may be taken into account in the review of all grant proposals and selection of applications for funding; timelines; submission instructions; grant payment procedures; and legal requirements. Applicants must be familiar with this information.

Procurement

Grant Provisions for this program (included in the document cited immediately above) include the federal regulation requiring grantees to conduct all procurement transactions in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with the standards of 45 CFR 1183.36. Local and state provisions may be more stringent. State requirements are available upon request.

10. For further information:

Questions about the LSTA Library Outreach Services Grants should be directed to State Library of North Carolina, Library Development Section: Penny Hornsby, Federal Programs Consultant; 919-807-7420; <penny.hornsby@ncmail.net>.

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APPENDIX A

Clarification for Public School Libraries on Use of Grant and Matching Funds for Salaries and Benefits

The State Library understands that it is an accepted practice in the public school environment for full-time staff to be paid hourly or contract wages for certain kinds of work done after school hours or on weekends. However, this is not an allowable option for use of grant funds under the guidelines of this LSTA grant program.

Allowable salary and benefits costs paid with **grant** funds may be **only** for temporary staff. Grant funds may **not** be used to pay existing full-time staff for additional hours. However, a percentage (up to 25%) of the required local *match* can be met with salary and benefits for existing staff that will work with the project.

We suggest the following possible strategies to help meet staffing needs in your proposed project:

- look to the school system for any part-time staff that could assist;
- consider working with retirees;
- use 10-month staff members for help during any summer months. (This last option would not be allowable for after-hours work during the school year. Note: the grant project implementation period runs from July 1 to June 30.)

Questions about these guidelines should be directed to Penny Hornsby; 919-807-7420, <penny.hornsby@ncmail.net>.